(viii) Mahmoud Ahmedinejad-President of Iran;

(ix) N. Enkhbayar-President of Mongolia.

Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, was not able to attend the SCO and CICASummits due to domestic pre-occupations and India was represented by Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Government is of the view that:

SCO provides an opportunity for India to cooperate with members and observers to increase economic interaction, cultural exchanges and work jointly on counter-terrorism and against illegal trafficking of narcotics;

CICA can help contribute to the development of a cooperative and pluralistic security order in Asia, based on mutual understanding, trust and sovereign equality. CICA also offers the possibility of having a comprehensive structure of economic cooperation linking various parts of Asia which are developing at different rates.

Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan

320. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Hindus and Sikhs that have left Afghanistan due to unrest;

(b) the number of them in India; and

(c) the number of Hindus and Sikhs that are still in Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) It is estimated that before the conflicts and civil strife in the 1990s, Afghanistan's Hindu and Sikh population was over 200,000. Since no census has been conducted in Afghanistan after 2001, exact figure of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan is not available. However, it is estimated that the present size of Afghan Sikh and Hindu community is around 3000. Information regarding number of Hindus and Sikhs who have left Afghanistan and have come to India is not available.